

REMARKS

In reply to the Final Office Action of February 2, 2009, Applicant submits the following remarks.

Claims 1, 22-26 and 28-37 are currently pending, of which claims 1 and 26 are independent. Claims 2-21, 27, 38 and 39 have been cancelled, and claims 1 and 26 have been amended. Support for the claim amendments may be found in FIGS. 1-3 (e.g., diodes 19 and 20), and related description on page 5. No new matter has been introduced. Moreover, since claims 1 and 26 have been amended to incorporate subject matter that was generally recited in claims 38 and 39, no issues are raised by the amendments and the amendments are proper despite the final rejection.

Claim Rejection—35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 22-26 and 28-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Goddard (U.S. Patent No. 4,297,629).

Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 at least because Goddard does not describe or suggest “wherein splitting the battery groups and connecting the battery groups in parallel to the main voltage source comprises doing so using a single switching device, and wherein the battery groups and the load are decoupled from the main voltage source by a diode device with at least one diode arrangement therebetween,” as recited in independent claim 1.

Rather, Goddard discloses an automatic switching arrangement for two batteries that are charged in parallel and discharged in series, where the arrangement includes a diode D1 that is part of the charging circuit, and the diode D1 is used with transistor T1 in a control unit (Goddard: Abstract, FIG. 1; Col. 4:25-46, 61-68; Col. 5:1-46). Goddard discloses that diode D1 is **directly connected in series between two batteries, BT1 and BT2**, so that Goddard cannot disclose “the battery groups and the load are decoupled from the main voltage source by a diode device **with at least one diode arrangement therebetween**,” as recited in claim 1 (Goddard: Abstract, FIG. 1; Col. 4:25-46, 61-68; Col. 5:1-46). Further, Goddard discloses that **diode D1 is**

not connected to a load, Ut, for decoupling purposes, so that Goddard cannot disclose **“the battery groups and the load are decoupled from the main voltage source** by a diode device with at least one diode arrangement therebetween,” as recited in claim 1 (Goddard: Abstract, FIG. 1; Col. 4:25-46, 61-68; Col. 5:1-46, emphasis added). FIGS. 2-7 of Goddard also show various embodiments of the automatic switching arrangement, in which the diode D1 is configured similar to the embodiment of FIG. 1. However, for all of these embodiments, Goddard does not describe or suggest the above recited features of claim 1. Applicant submits that independent claim 1 and dependent claims 22-25 are all allowable for at least these reasons.

Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 26 at least because, for reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to claim 1, Goddard does not describe or suggest “wherein a single switching device provides both the splitting circuit and the connection circuit, and wherein a diode device for decoupling is connected between the main voltage source and the battery groups, said diode device comprising at least one diode connected in a connecting line to the main voltage source.”

Conclusion

It is believed that all of the pending issues have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, objection, issue, or comment, including the Office Action's characterizations of the art, does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue, or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment or cancellation of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment or cancellation. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute the rejected claims in further prosecution of this or related applications

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Page : 7 of 7

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Respectfully submitted,

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